

# Coalition for a Better Memphis Candidate Questionnaire Memphis Mayor

The Coalition for a Better Memphis is an independent non-profit organization, made up of Shelby County individuals, businesses and organizations. Its mission is to assist area voters in identifying qualified candidates for public office.

In 2009, CBM's Candidate Assessment Committee is interviewing candidates for the Memphis Mayor with the intention of publishing a "voter guide" of candidate evaluations.

We hope that you might be able to use an electronic version of this questionnaire. If you would like an electronic version please immediately contact Peggy Callahan at [peggy@bettermemphis.org](mailto:peggy@bettermemphis.org). A full electronic package will be provided to you.

Completed questionnaires may be mailed to:  
**Coalition for a Better Memphis**  
**7730 Goshawk Cove**  
**Cordova, TN 38016**

Electronic versions can be emailed to:  
Peggy Callahan  
[peggy@bettermemphis.org](mailto:peggy@bettermemphis.org)

Direct any questions to:  
Peggy Callahan  
[peggy@bettermemphis.org](mailto:peggy@bettermemphis.org)

Please complete this questionnaire and return it to  
The Coalition for a Better Memphis

**No later than 5 p.m.,**  
**September 11, 2009**

*Please answer all questions carefully – your responses will be printed on the CBM website EXACTLY as they are provided to us.*

NAME: VUONG VAUGHN VO

- 1a. Please describe your background and your qualifications for this position. What experiences caused you to run for this office. What previous experience qualifies you more than your opponents to lead on Day 1?
- 1b. What previous experience do you have running a business, managing employees or controlling a budget?
- 1c. Beginning with the most recent position, please list all public offices you have held. Please include positions on appointed boards or commissions.
- 1d. If you have previously run for elected office but were not elected, please list those races below.

- a. Being a Memphis resident for over 13 years, I have seen how Memphis has changed over the years. Unfortunately, most of the changes that we, as Memphians, experience are not what we can be proud of. Such issues as crime, school system, neighborhood planning and development, etc. are indeed some of the most concerned ones that any average Memphian would "die" to see improved. I am one of those average Memphians, who wants to make a difference, and my commitment and willingness to serve are my strengths.
- b. I'm currently helping manage a family-owned business that has been in business about 12 years in Memphis, my job includes inventory controlling and managing 4 other employees.
- c. President / vice president of the Vietnamese Student Association at the University of Memphis 2000 - 2002.
- d. Never run for elected office before.

NAME:           VUONG VAUGHN VO          

2a. What is your vision for the City – how would you use this office to achieve the vision?

2b. What are the three greatest issues facing the City of Memphis today?

2c. What issues do you believe will shape the City over the next few years?

a. Making Memphis a safe and better place to live. To achieve this goal, I will:

- Come down hard on gun racketeers with tougher laws.
- Increase budget for school system
- Create more efficient youth programs and neighborhood activities
- Develop and maintain programs for parks, etc.
- Make Memphis more "green" and economically efficient by implementing new technologies and collaborating on plans of action and priorities.

b.

- 1/ Crime and law enforcement
- 2/ Education - School System
- 3/ Economic Development

c. Crime and education are the two most important issues that I strongly believe need serious investment and consideration as well as planning. Ultimately, besides the economical views, these are what will help determine how liveable and desirable Memphis will be.

NAME:           VUONG VAUGHN VO          

3. How do you plan on insuring that there is diversity represented in the development of public policy, staffing and appointments, and city contracting?

Being an Asian American, I surely understand and much appreciate how necessary and important diversity is. If elected, I will do and take careful actions to make sure that all of the appointed officials make up an even percentage of diversity.

MEMPHIS MAYOR QUESTIONNAIRE 2009

NAME:           VUONG VUQUAN VO          

4. What role should the City of Memphis government play in promoting the economic development for the community? What specific initiatives or actions would you promote and/or support regarding both large and small businesses?

City government should involve all city departments and boards in collaborating on plans to determine the economic development priorities for the community

To help promote and support businesses, I will push for tax incentives for those who are creating jobs and locating inside the city. I will also help encourage more young and talented Memphians to stay and work within our city and community through lottery scholarships.

NAME: VUONG VAUGHN VD

5. How would you strengthen and support existing neighborhoods that are within the City of Memphis and what barriers to community redevelopment do you see in these areas? How do you propose to address the neighborhood blight in a proactive manner?

Parks, community centers, and programs that support children and families play a major role in our neighborhoods. A comprehensive plan for maintenance and development is necessary to keep them efficient and beneficial to our people. Tougher penalties for code violations and an action center where citizens can help participate in making neighborhoods better.

Promoting neighborhood-based economic plans is also important in improving neighborhood blights.

NAME: VUONG VAUGHN VO

6. Discuss the current administrative structure and do you have a vision for altering this structure? How would you strengthen a culture of accountability and outcome based on performance standards for Divisions of City Government as well as appointed positions?

If elected, I have plans for a totally new administrative structure. I will create a more efficient system by ridding of non-vital services to help save taxpayers' dollars. To maintain a high level of accountability, I will set higher bars on qualifications of appointed positions and also implement a service term limits on all positions. All appointed positions will be selected based on not only by professional qualifications but a vigorous background/history check.

NAME: VUONG VAUGHN VD

7. Give us your thoughts on a metro form of government and/or consolidated services.

Speaking of consolidation, I am proudly for a metro form of government. It is definitely not an efficient government if there has to be two (2) of everything when whatever one does has a tremendous effect on the other. That is exactly what happens here between Memphis and Shelby County. Since we are ~~so~~ inter-connected so closely in many ways, it would make more sense for a consolidated government. It's all about efficiency.

NAME: VUONG VAUGHN VD

8. What is the City's responsibility to Memphis City Schools? How should the relationship between the City and Memphis City Schools be structured?

The city's responsibility is to stand behind and support the school system in every way it needs. That includes, but does not limit to, sufficient funding and managing

The city and school officials must coordinate and collaborate on plans in improving and developing priorities for the children and staff.

NAME: VUONG VAUGHN VO

9. How can the Mayor effectively contribute to the reduction of the crime rate in the City of Memphis? What current strategies would you continue to support and what changes would you propose?

A search for the best qualified professionals to lead the city's law enforcement and police department would be a start. Supporting a sufficient budget for up-to-date technologies is another way to help make police officers and officials more productive in their services.

Blue Crush is a successful program created by Director Godwin, which has my full support. I will also help build onto this success by creating a program that targets crime problems from the beginning.

Guns and drugs are the leading cause for violence in our city. I will push for tougher laws and penalties for any violators.

MEMPHIS MAYOR QUESTIONNAIRE 2009

NAME: VUONG VAUGHN VO

10. State your position regarding residency restrictions for City workers, including police officers.

with my new consolidation plans, my position would require that city workers be a county residents for at least 2 yrs.

MEMPHIS MAYOR QUESTIONNAIRE 2009

NAME: VUONG VAUGHN VO

11. Are you familiar with the current budget and what would be your major budget priorities?

Our city is built on people and it ~~should~~ be for the people. With that being said, it is fair enough to say that our budget priorities should be schools and communities.

Without a sufficient budget, our school system and neighborhoods will collapse.

MEMPHIS MAYOR QUESTIONNAIRE 2009

NAME:           VUONG VAUGHN VO          

12. Would you be willing to submit to a background check and allow the results to be published?

*Of course.*